1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954
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Silwa

This improvement is also obvious in Silwa itself: ten years ago there were two public scribes in the village to whom people would resort for letter-writing or making formal complaints, but they have had to close their establishment on not finding enough customers. The spread of literacy in Egypt has generally been made more difficult because of the difference between the colloquial and the classical Arabic, which is taught in schools. The relation of the former to the latter is almost like that of Swiss German to High German. Moreover, some reformers maintain that it takes too long with the present script for the child to become sufficiently literate, and this difficulty has prompted some Egyptian scholars to advocate a Latin script instead of the present Arab script.[1] The numerous rules of inflection, changing vowels and consonants, and the diacritical marks attached to the words according to meaning, make correct reading a tiresome task. It has often been said, and not without some measure of justification, that in European languages, one has to read in order to understand, while in Arabic, one has to understand in order to read.

In Silwa, however, though people are increasingly attaching more importance to the ability to read and write, this instrument cannot be considered as a vital motivating force in their lives. The villagers' traditions can be mainly communicated orally, with a few literate persons on whom would devolve the responsibility of communicating the cultural and religious aspects requiring literacy. It is not surprising, then, that some of the villagers, especially most women, who had learnt reading and writing at a compulsory school, have almost relapsed into illiteracy. The remoteness and relative isolation of the village, along with the poverty in cultural influences such as newspapers, books, and other suitable reading material, explain to a great extent this phenomenon. The degree of literacy could be better assessed, however, from the kind of literature that is read in the village, and from the extent to which the reading ability is utilized. There are hardly any books in the village, except those few related to religious matters in one way or another. The following is a list of all the books which are acquired and read by the villagers:

Books on Jurisprudence (fikh): *Matn Asafti, al-Ishmawi, Shark abu-al Hasan, matn Addardiri, Risalat Ibn abi-Zaid al-Kairuwani, Azzurkani.*

Burdat-al-Busiri (The Mantle Ode), a hymn in praise of the Prophet.

Dalail al-Khairat. A book read usually for propitiation, and in petitions to God.

Matn al-Jawhara in Divinity (Tawheed—Unity of God).

Manakib Assalihen (The Virtue of Pious Men).

Mankib al-Hassan wal-Hussain (The Virtues of the Prophet's Cousins).

Manakib Assayid al-Badawi.

Kasaid ahl Attarik (Poems of the Mystics).

Certain books from which texts of charms are copied.

Mawlid al-Manawi (Prophet's Life-story).

[1] A. F. Fahmy, *Latin Script for the Writing of Arabic* (Arabic), Cairo, 1944.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Mawlid Salma (Prophet's Life-story).

These books are usually obtained from an itinerary vendor, who occasionally visits the village. Amongst those who own books, three persons actually possess the bulk of the books found in the village: they are the Sheikh of the recognized 'Kuttab', a village school teacher, and an ambitious young man who owns a shop in the village at present, after having spent more than ten years in Cairo and Alexandria. Yet perhaps none of these people possess more than a dozen books.

As to the spread of the newspapers, there are ten persons in this community of over three thousand people who buy newspapers, although not regularly. They get them from a distributor travelling by local train. Three of the newspaper buyers are shopkeepers, while two others are teachers in the compulsory school. News naturally infiltrates to a large extent through reading aloud the news in the village gatherings, or through borrowing the newspapers. Up to 1951 there was no radio set in the village and, of course, no cinema, thus contact with the outside world, as far as these aids are concerned, was entirely absent.

The extent of literacy in this community could also be expressed in the number of people who have been to any school other than those educational institutions existing in the village (before the establishment of the primary school in the village). The following is a list enumerating all the boys and men who are receiving some kind of education outside the village:[1]

Nine boys in the primary school in Aswan (under 12 years old).

One boy in the secondary school in Aswan (14 years old).

Six boys in the Training College for Elementary Teachers in Aswan.

Two elementary school teachers who are actually teaching in the village compulsory school.

One higher education.

In analysing these educated people from the village, it is important to show the various incentives for their education. Four of those in the primary school and the elementary training college are cousins: the father of two of them is an Azharite and a teacher at the village school, and it is not surprising that he should send his two sons to school in Aswan. Two years ago, however, his younger brother quarrelled with him, and decided to vie with him at every turn, even in sending two of his sons to the same schools as those of his brother. Two of the other boys are sons of a relatively well-off woman who forced her husband to divorce her. She then married a younger man, and managed to keep her two sons under her custody by sending them to school and personally bearing the expenses incurred by their education in Aswan, as the father himself could not do so. One of the boys in the primary school in Aswan is the son of a blind man who possesses practically no land and on receiving aid (£E2 a month) for his disability from the Ministry of Endowment, decided to send his son to school.

[1] There are no village girls at all who have received or are receiving education outside the village compulsory school.

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
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gather his friends around him for a social meeting in the evening. The light of the moon and stars suffices, or if in winter they must retreat into the dark chamber, the weak glimmer of an oil-lamp. In this country nothing is known of nocturnal labours either of hand or head even among the learned, and the many blind and blear-eyed people that here wander about have not contracted their ailments through overstraining their eyes. As to-day is, so is to-morrow, and the most momentous events passing in the great world here make on most people no impression whatever. For it is only a very few that receive a newspaper, and still fewer understand it, partly because its language is too fine and therefore not suited to the mass, partly because the necessary previous knowledge of every kind is absent. Among the ancient Egyptians the common people, such as artisans, were forbidden under severe penalties to mingle in politics. It is only the most urgent necessity that causes the citizen to take a journey, and when he does travel he makes a pilgrimage to Meccah, or, at most, goes to some other country in which Islam prevails. For in the land of the Franks something would every instant come into collision with his ideas and customs; he would have to eat, if not swine's flesh, yet dishes in which swine's fat forms an ingredient; he would have to eat carrion (that is, the flesh of animals strangled, and not slaughtered with an invocation to God); he would not have the proper conditions for the performance of his religious duties, such as his ablutions and prayer five times a day, nor any mosque or muezzin. If he ever happens to have been in Europe, or even in a town in which the Frankish mode of life prevails, he never ceases to tell his countrymen of the ridiculous and preposterous things he saw there, of course not without admitting that there was much good also, especially if there be a Frank among his audience. The ancient Egyptians had a still stronger prejudice and fanaticism against foreign people and foreign things.

LIFE OF THE WOMEN.

Though the members of the opposite sex certainly do not